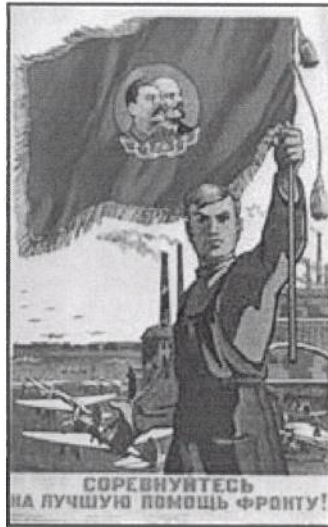


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"THERE'S NOWHERE QUITE LIKE PARIS
IN THE SPRINGTIME!!"

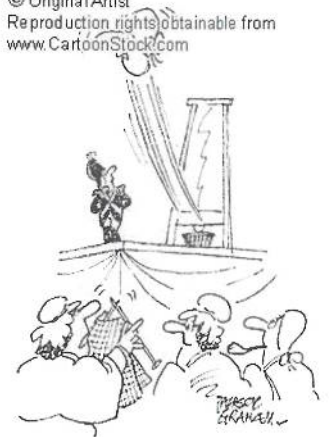


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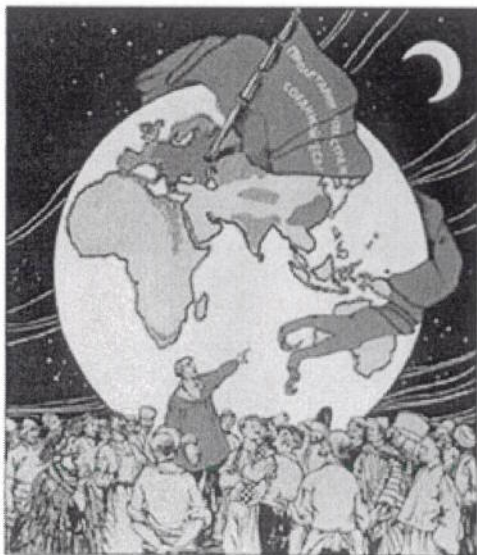
"I'VE NEVER BEEN HEAD HUNTED BEFORE"

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"DAMN -- I WAS KNITTING THIS
SCARF FOR HIM..."

Revs Exam Study Pack 2009



"After the government has taken their bit
this is all I have left!"



Rasputin at the Doctor's

Unit 3 and 4: Revolutions

Revolutions in history have been reconsidered and debated by historians. The study of a revolution should consider differing perspectives and the reasons why different groups have made different judgments of the history of the revolution.

For the *two* selected revolutions, *both* areas of study must be explored.

- The French Revolution
- The Russian Revolution

AREA OF STUDY 1

Revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events

The periods for this area of study are:

- French Revolution 1781 to 4 August 1789 (Necker's *Compte Rendu* to the 4 August 1789)
- Russian Revolution 1905 to October 1917 (Bloody Sunday to the Bolshevik Revolution)

Historians have put forward different theories about the causes of revolution; for example, inadequate response to structural change, political divisions, the failure of rising expectations, the loss of authority, the erosion of public confidence in the old order. Questions have been raised such as: Why did social tensions and ideological conflicts increase in the pre-revolutionary period? Why could social tensions and ideological conflicts not be contained or constrained within the traditional order? What events or circumstances eroded confidence in the government or weakened the capacity of the ruling class to meet challenges to its authority?

Historians place differing emphasis on the role of ideas, leaders and movements in the development of the revolution. Debate occurs about the role of the work of the Philosophes in the French Revolution and the role of Marxism in the Russian Revolution. Similar debate occurs around the role of various individuals such as Vladimir Lenin in bringing about the success or failure of the revolution. Other historians focus more on circumstances and longer-term developments as the main contributors to revolution and determinants of the course it would take.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to evaluate the role of ideas, leaders, movements and events in the development of the revolution. To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 1.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- the chronology of key events and factors which contributed to the revolution;

- the causes of tensions and conflicts generated in the old regime that many historians see as contributing to the revolution; for example, rising and unfulfilled class expectations; fluctuations in economic activity; failed attempts at economic, social or political reform; perceived social or economic inequality or lack of political voice; the impact of war or economic crisis that contributed to revolution such as the harvest crisis and state bankruptcy in the French economy, the social and economic impact of World War I on Tsarist Russia, the Boxer Rebellion in China;
- the ideas and ideologies utilised in revolutionary struggle; for example, ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity, Marxist ideas, nationalism and the rights of freeborn men;
- the role of revolutionary individuals and groups in bringing about change; for example, in France, Sièyes, Lafayette, Mirabeau; in Russia, Kerensky, Trotsky, Lenin, the Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks

Key skills

These skills include the ability to:

- document the chronological events that contributed to the revolution;
- analyse information about the causes of tension and conflict in the old regime that contributed to revolution;
- analyse the ideas that were utilised in the revolutionary struggle;
- analyse a range of historical evidence to evaluate the role of revolutionary individuals and groups in bringing about change;
- synthesise evidence to develop a coherent argument about the role of revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events in the development of the revolution;
- consider a range of historians' interpretations.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Creating a new society

The periods for this area of study are:

- French Revolution 5 August 1789 to Year 111 (1795) (Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen to the dissolution of the Convention Year 111);
- Russian Revolution November 1917 to 1924 (Initial decrees to the death of Lenin);

A new political order and a new society were not created easily. Revolutions took many years to achieve their initial promise of social and political change. Endangered and radicalised by political dissent, civil war, economic breakdown and wars of foreign intervention, resistance to revolution assumed different forms impeding the transformation, which the revolutionaries had envisioned. In times of crisis, revolutionary governments often became more authoritarian, instituting more severe policies of social control.

Historians debate the success of the revolutionary ideas, leaders, groups and governments in achieving their ideals by evaluating the nature of the new society as the revolution consolidated. Questions are raised, such as: Has a completely new order been established with a significantly changed ruling group and ideology, with new methods of governing and new social institutions? Have the subjects of the new state acquired greater freedom and an improved standard of living? Has the revolution been successful in establishing a different set of values that fulfilled the ideals of the revolutionaries?

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse the challenges facing the emerging new order, and the way in which attempts were made to create a new society, and evaluate the nature of the society created by the revolution. To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 2.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- the contribution of individuals and groups to the creation of the new society; for example, in France, Danton, Marat and Robespierre; in Russia, Trotsky and Lenin;
- the cause of difficulties or crises faced by the revolutionary groups or governments as a new state was consolidated; for example, the revolutionary war in France, the Civil War and Foreign Intervention in Russia
- the response of the key revolutionary individuals, groups, governments or parties to the difficulties that they encountered as the new state was consolidated; for example, Jacobin Terror in France and the Red Guard in Russia; Civil War, and War Communism in Russia;
- the compromise of revolutionary ideals; for example, the NEP in Russia; the radicalisation of policies; for example, during the authoritarian rule of the Committee of Public Safety in France, the Civil War in Russia;
- the changes and continuities that the revolution brought about in the structure of government, the organisation of society, and its values, and the distribution of wealth and conditions of everyday life.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- gather evidence of the difficulties faced by revolutionary individuals, groups, governments or parties in the creation of a new society;
- analyse evidence of the response of the key revolutionary individuals, groups, governments or parties to the difficulties that they encountered as the new state was consolidated;
- evaluate the degree to which the revolution brought about change from the old regime;
- consider a range of historians' interpretations.

ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit.

Good sites for quizzes

Russia

<http://www.quia.com/custom/18605main.html>

http://www.funtrivia.com/quizzes/history/european_history/russian.html

<http://www.sparknotes.com/history/european/russianrev/quiz.html>

<http://www.triv.net/html/Quiz5/quiz8554.shtml>

France

<http://www.quia.com/quiz/117791.html>

<http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/year8links/frenchrevolution.shtml>

<http://www.quia.com/sh/2658.html>

EXAMS AND SACS

You need to place events and ideas *in context*.

- Sieyes inflamed the imagination of the with his pamphlet “What is the Third Estate?”
- The Storming of the Bastille made the King accept the National Assembly and saw France transform into a Constitutional Monarchy.

You need to name key actions and responses of individuals with *detail*. This will demonstrate *quality thinking*. Use accurate information and at all times *ADDRESS THE QUESTION*.

Don't describe events, relate the information.

SOURCES, EXTRACTS AND VISUALS

- reliability of sources
- usefulness/contrast of viewpoints
- limitations and strengths
- historiography
- WHO does it represent/leave out?
- WHAT does it represent/leave out?
- WHEN does it represent?
- WHERE does it fit in to the revolution?
- WHY is it useful or not?
- HOW reliable is it?
- MUST ADDRESS the importance of sources in relation to the revolution
- MUST ANSWER THE QUESTION
- Use phrases that show your thinking; “This image shows...”
- DO NOT simply describe
- Provide as much DETAIL and FACTUAL information as you can
- Use *precise knowledge*; “This image shows the Clergy, First Estate...”
- Define the division of the Third Estate in graphics; peasants, sans culottes, bourgeoisie

ESSAYS

Last year's essays:

- were too general
- lacked quotations
- lacked conclusion
- had too much on the Old Regime
- didn't adequately address the questions
- were too 'narrative' – you're writing an essay NOT telling a story
- wrote too much – only use space provided – pending size of handwriting

Focus on:

- structure
- paragraphing
- chronological order
- facts and dates
- how were living conditions affected (compare social conditions)
- impact on society (they were FORCED to question the Monarchy, they DEMANDED choice)
- meeting VCAA descriptors
- use historiography as evidence – be aware of strengths and limitations

ESSENTIAL EXAM PREPARATION

'Concept cards' will not only help you to revise for your end of year examination, but they will help you to organise and address information specifically related to the VCAA criterion that **MUST** be addressed in order to achieve highly. I would encourage you to carry these with you, this way you can revise while you're waiting for a train, in the car etc. I know this sounds 'daggy' but the more accessible you allow the information to be, the more succinct your responses will be and the better you will do. Here is an example:

AOS 1: Revolutionary Ideas, Leaders, Movements and Events

What was the Great Fear of July-August 1789?

- Peasants heard of Paris revolution and feared noble retaliation in the Countryside
- Rumours of a noble 'pact of famine' and fear of burning crops
- Panicky over-reaction led to collective crowd action by village communities
- Peasant crowds were disciplined and focused: attacked feudal records, not landlords
- Attacked castles and burned feudal documents recording dues
- National Assembly condemned these as an attack on property (sacrosanct)
- NA declared peasants to be brigands; sent out National Guards to restore order
- These disorders only affected certain provinces of France but successive reports to NA created a sense of massive rebellion

Section A Part One

Remember: you must write about ONE of your revolutions in Section A only, and the OTHER of your revolutions in Section B only! It is up to you which revolutions you choose to write on in each section, although your teacher may have given you specific advice about this.

This part of the exam tests Area of Study One (Revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events) for one of your revolutions. It requires you to complete two paragraph-answer responses to specific questions about your revolution. This part is worth 20 marks, or 25 percent of your total exam score. It is recommended, given the structure of the exam, that you spend no more than 30 minutes on this part.

What kind of questions might I see?

Remember that the underlying 'question' of this Area of Study is *why did revolution occur*, so these questions will be seeking you to demonstrate a close understanding of this, through a focus on leaders, movements, ideas and events. Some of the themes or terms that questions might ask you to explain (depending of course on the revolution involved) include:

- conflict
- political representation
- political mismanagement
- the presence or actions of the military
- the effect of war
- taxation and/or economic policy
- social division or dissatisfaction
- revolutionary ideas
- the role of specific leaders and/or groups
- the significance of specific events

Making lists of key points and specific information (eg. dates, documents, people) under each of these headings is a useful way to revise and study.

What is the assessor looking for?

- a response that *answers the question directly*
- a response that shows *specific knowledge* by discussing 4-5 points in some detail
- a response that demonstrates *how these contributed to revolution*

Helpful hints

- don't write dot points: the assessors want to see a paragraph!
- stick to the 12-line space provided; don't write 2-3 lines over this space
- answer the question in your first sentence
- devote 1-2 lines to each of your 4-5 different points
- conclude by discussing how these points contributed to the development of revolution

Section A Part Two

This part of the exam tests Area of Study Two (Creating a new society) for one of your revolutions. It requires you to examine and analyse a piece of evidence. There will be a range of questions relating to this source: at least three very short questions worth 1-2 marks each, one question worth 6 marks and one question worth 8 marks. In total, this part will be worth 20 marks, or 25 percent of your exam score. It is recommended, given the exam structure, that you allow 30 minutes to complete this part.

What kind of evidence might I see?

The source used in this part will be an extract from either a historian, a document or a commentary (such as a novel, a biography or a piece of journalism). Some examples of this might include:

- America: a pamphlet from the ratification debate, a speech by Patrick Henry in 1787, or an extract from Gordon Wood
- France: a speech by Robespierre, a piece of legislation from the National Convention, or an extract from Simon Schama
- Russia: an order from Lenin to hang kulaks or an extract from Richard Pipes or Leon Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*

What kind of questions might I see?

Remember that the underlying 'question' of this Area of Study is *what was the new society like, and how was it formed?* The source and the questions will ask you to consider the revolutionaries who shaped the new society, the challenges and obstacles they faced and how they responded. Generally the questions will adopt this structure and use these terms:

- the shorter 1-2 mark questions will often begin with 'What...' and will be comprehension questions that ask you to identify key ideas, arguments or assumptions made in the source; you will have one or two lines of writing space allocated for each of these questions
- the 6-mark question will begin 'Using your knowledge...' and will require you to introduce information and evidence relevant to the source, but not actually shown in it; you will have ten lines of writing space allocated for this question
- the 8-mark question will ask you to comment on the '...usefulness' of the source, in other words, to make critical comment on the source, its ideas, arguments and assumptions; you will have twelve lines of writing space allocated for this question

What are the assessors looking for?

- responses that answer each question clearly and directly
- responses that demonstrate both an understanding of the source and its context in the new society
- responses that include the student's own close knowledge of the new society
- responses that demonstrate an understanding of historiography (different interpretations and arguments)

Helpful hints

- as with other parts of the exam, fill the lines both don't 'cram' or go well over the space provided
- answer each question in the first sentence, particularly with the longer responses
- with the 6-mark and 8-mark question, a number of different points need to be covered in your response
- include specific knowledge in the 6-mark question (eg. dates, events, people, documents, statistics)
- include at least one other interpretation and/or at least one other historian's view in the 8-mark question

Section B Part One

Remember: you must write about ONE of your revolutions in Section A only, and the OTHER of your revolutions in Section B only! It is up to you which revolutions you choose to write on in each section, although your teacher may have given you specific advice about this.

This part of the exam tests Area of Study One (Revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events) for the other revolution you have studied. It requires you to examine and analyse a piece of evidence and response to specific questions about that source. This part is worth 20 marks, or 25 percent of your total exam score. It is recommended, given the structure of the exam, that you spend no more than 30 minutes on this part.

What kind of evidence might I see?

The source used in this part may be either an image (eg. a painting, cartoon or poster) document extract or part of a commentary (eg. a novel, biography or piece of journalism). Examples of what might appear include:

- America: an extract from the Declaration of Independence, a speech by Patrick Henry in 1765, or an anti-British cartoon
- France: an extract from Sieyès' *What is the Third Estate?*, a speech by Marquis de Lafayette, or a cartoon showing the three estates
- Russia: an extract from Lenin's *April Theses*, an extract from John Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World*, or a poster of Lenin

What kind of questions might I see?

Remember that the underlying 'question' of this Area of Study is *why did revolution occur*, so these questions will be seeking you to demonstrate a close understanding of this, through a focus on leaders, movements, ideas and events. Generally the questions will adopt this structure and use these terms:

- the short 1-2 mark questions will often begin with 'What...' and will be comprehension questions that ask you to identify key ideas, arguments or assumptions made in the source; you will have one or two lines of writing space allocated for each of these questions

- the 6-mark question will begin 'Using your knowledge...' and will require you to introduce information and evidence relevant to the source, but not actually shown in it; you will have ten lines of writing space allocated for this question
- the 8-mark question will ask you to comment on the validity of the source, its ideas and arguments; you will be required to offer critical comment about the source and provide alternatives to the ideas expressed; you will have twelve lines of writing space allocated for this question

What are the assessors looking for?

- responses that answer each question clearly and directly
- responses that demonstrate both an understanding of the source and its context in the development of revolution
- responses that include the student's own close knowledge of the development of revolution
- responses that demonstrate critical analysis of the source

Helpful hints

- as with other parts of the exam, fill the lines both don't 'cram' or go well over the space provided
- answer each question in the first sentence, particularly with the longer responses
- with the 6-mark and 8-mark question, a number of different points need to be covered in your response
- include specific knowledge in the 6-mark question (eg. dates, events, people, documents, statistics)
- include at least one other interpretation and/or a contradictory historian's view in the 8-mark question

Section B Part Two

Remember: you must write about ONE of your revolutions in Section A only, and the OTHER of your revolutions in Section B only! It is up to you which revolutions you choose to write on in each section, although your teacher may have given you specific advice about this.

This part of the exam tests Area of Study Two (Creating a new society) for the other revolution you have studied. It requires you to select one of three general essay questions and to write a short essay about the new society. This part is worth 20 marks, or 25 percent of your total exam score. It is recommended, given the structure of the exam, that you spend 30 minutes on this part.

What kind of questions might I see?

Remember that the underlying 'question' of this Area of Study is *what was the new society like, and how was it formed?* The questions will ask you to consider the revolutionaries who shaped the new society, the challenges and obstacles they faced, how they responded, and the outcomes of the revolution. Because the three questions

need to apply to all four revolutions they are quite broad; they do not specifically apply to any revolution. Some examples of how questions might appear include:

- "The revolution failed to produce a new society that matched its original aims." Discuss, providing evidence to support your answer.
- "Violence, force and terror were as much a part of the new society as the old regime." Discuss, providing evidence to support your answer.
- "Economic problems prevented the new society from fulfilling its social and political goals." Discuss, providing evidence to support your answer.
- "In the new society, political power became the main concern of the revolutionaries." Discuss, providing evidence to support your answer.
- "Generally speaking, the revolution failed to create a new society." Discuss, providing evidence to support your answer.

What are the assessors looking for?

- responses that answer the question and provide a strong contention
- responses that demonstrate a close understanding of the new society
- responses that cover at least three aspects of the new society in some depth
- responses that are clear, use appropriate language and terminology, and have effective structure

Helpful hints

- remember, you are writing on the new society... mention the old regime as a reference point only
- answer the question clearly in your introduction, indicating which revolution you are writing on
- offer a strong contention in the introduction, i.e. give your view of the new society and why you have formed this
- write in the third-person: no "I" or "me" or "my"
- plan and structure your essay accordingly: cover three aspects of the new society in 1-2 paragraphs each
- include as much detail as you can (dates, events, quotations, statistics, documents)
- historiography is not essential for this part but it does constitute evidence, so may be used

Join the [Online Forum](#) where other users are sharing their practice questions and answers. Good luck!

This document is taken directly from Steve Thompson's site:

<http://www.vcehistory.info/>

What is historiography?

Historiography is a complex part of the VCE History (Revolutions) course that many students struggle to understand and lack confidence in discussing. This essay makes some attempt to explain what historiography is, how it's relevant to your course, and ways of approaching it. There are many different theoretical, academic and 'dictionary' definitions of historiography ... let's start with a definition that is directly relevant to students of VCE History. Historiography is:

1. *Different ways of understanding or interpreting historical events, groups or leaders.*
2. *Understanding the reasons why these different interpretations and theories exist.*

There are literally thousands of books on the American, French and Russian revolutions or specific aspects of them, written over decades and centuries, from the conclusion of each revolution onwards and continuing today (there were more than 40 American Revolution-specific texts released in 2004 alone). Obviously this massive pool of knowledge, evidence and theory isn't static, nor is it consistent or stable in its assessments. There are many different observations, theories and interpretations stemming from each revolution: some are negative, some positive, some seemingly neutral or objective. These different perspectives exist for several reasons that will be explored later in this page.

It is the task of the VCE student to be familiar some of these different perspectives and understand why they exist. That is not to say that you need to read numerous texts on one revolution to acquire this knowledge; in a semester-long unit that is impractical. What you can do is to learn about different historians, their books and their perspectives; you should be able to build up a picture of each historian through short readings (reading introductions, conclusions and 'dipping into' books) and activities (such as quote-harvesting and extract analysis), as well as discussion with your teacher and fellow students.

Why are there so many different interpretations? There are three reasons for this:

- Historians' interpretations are shaped by different political perspectives

You've probably heard the terms left-wing, right-wing, liberal, conservative and Marxist before ... they are political perspectives that reflect different views of the world, contrasting values and beliefs about what is important, and differing opinions about the roles of the individual, the state and the economy. Everybody has a political perspective, nobody is immune; usually they are shaped by your upbringing and the views of your parents, although they may change later as you experience different things and read more widely. Generally speaking, those with left-wing or Marxist views believe the following are important: economic equality; an end to war, class exploitation and misuse of government power; greater community-based cooperation to solve social and individual problems. Those with right-wing or conservative views favour economic opportunity; a naturally occurring social hierarchy, a focus on law and order; the rights of business and the importance of employers. In the middle of these two schools of thought are liberals, who consider individual freedoms and rights to be paramount over all other considerations.

A left-wing history, for example, will usually focus on the economic and class-driven forces that create and shape the revolution. A liberal or right-wing history will generally concern itself with the issues of political and social liberty, and how well those concepts were protected or furthered. A historian's view of a revolution is inextricably shaped by his or her political views and values - what roles government and society have, how they are structured and how they should be in the future. The body of writing on any significant historical event is always going to be a dialogue between opposing political perspectives; there is no 'truth', only viewpoints. To understand more about political perspectives and to learn more about your own, visit Political Compass on the Web and complete the questionnaire, which takes about 10-15 minutes. You will be provided with a full assessment of where your views fit into the spectrum of different political perspectives.

- Historians reach different conclusions because they see different things as significant

As well as the political perspectives that shape assessment and interpretation of events, there are also technical aspects to the writing of history that differ from writer to writer. There are fundamental questions that help individuals define the study of history as a whole: what is history, what purpose does it serve, who is it for and how should it be written. Because different historians have different views about history, consequently they will construct their research and writing in different ways. Some focus on the actions of great individuals: leaders, military commanders, activists or philosophers. Other historians see groups and broader movements as being more important: political parties, unions, revolutionary groups, the ubiquitous 'mob' or street crowds. Some see history as being driven by great forces, others see it as a series of responses to challenges, others as the product of economic struggle. For more information on this, [visit this page](#).

- History is always being re-written, consequently it changes over time

There are many reasons for this, some linked to the first and second points made above. As time changes so do the views and values of society; as different people - academics, writers, teachers, even students like you - take custodianship of history, they apply these changing views and values to the past so that they can make sense of it. This process is called revisionism and the historians who practice it are called revisionists because they revise, challenge and reform existing understandings about particularly historical events, even if there may have been a general consensus about them. The 1900s was a fertile period of revisionism as universities were opened up to more people, information was exchanged more freely and left-wing ideologies became more prominent; Marxist interpretations of revolutions and other historical events became more popular (this is still the case today in most Western universities).

Another factor that leads history to be rewritten is the location and availability of new evidence. Sometimes new documents, previously lost, are located by historians and shed new light on previously-formed conclusions. Governments and archives often release documents after long periods of secrecy; this was particularly the case with the Soviet Union, which since the 1980s has allowed access to many sources that were locked away for decades.

Sources:

<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historiography>

<http://www.pvhs.chico.k12.ca.us/~bsilva/ib/histo.html>

Guide to answering short answer questions

Mark allocation

9-10 marks	Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the question and uses appropriate historical terms and concepts. Applies evidence in a sophisticated manner to support arguments and conclusions. Demonstrates detailed knowledge of the commencement and ongoing development of the Revolution. Demonstrates detailed knowledge of the key events, factors, individuals and/or groups influencing the Revolution. Provides a sophisticated analysis of the revolutionary struggle.
6-8 marks	Demonstrates a sound understanding of the question and uses appropriate historical terms and concepts. Applies well developed evidence to support arguments and conclusions. Demonstrates knowledge of the commencement and ongoing development of the Revolution. Demonstrates knowledge of the key events, factors, individuals and/or groups influencing the Revolution. Provides some analysis of the revolutionary struggle.
3-5 marks	Demonstrates some understanding of the question and sometimes uses appropriate historical terms and concepts. Applies some evidence to support arguments and conclusions. Demonstrates some knowledge of the commencement and ongoing development of the Revolution. Demonstrates some knowledge of the key events, factors, individuals and/or groups influencing the Revolution. Provides limited analysis of the revolutionary struggle.
0-2 marks	Demonstrates limited or no understanding of the question and rarely uses appropriate historical terms and concepts. Applies little or no evidence to support arguments and conclusions. Demonstrates little or no knowledge of the commencement and ongoing development of the Revolution. Demonstrates little or no knowledge of the key events, factors, individuals and/or groups influencing the Revolution. Provides no analysis of the revolutionary struggle.

Section A part one Explained

This section will assess your understanding of Area of Study One.

The extended response section is supposed to be an opportunity for you to display your knowledge. There isn't room here for elaborate analysis or interpretation, and it is recommended that you **do not disagree** with the statement you are given. Usually you will be asked to 'Explain', 'Outline' or be asked 'How' or 'Why' something happened. For example: Explain how economic crises led to a revolutionary situation in Russia by 1917.

In this example, you are asked to identify a number of economic crises and how they specifically caused the development of a revolutionary situation in Russia. Of course, this question could apply to other revolutions if you changed the name of the country and the date.

Each question is worth 10 marks, so you should aim for 4-5 main points with 4-5 pieces of specific evidence. You have 15 minutes for each question, and approximately 11 lines in which to write.

Some tips on answering this type of question:

- Don't repeat the question in your first sentence; to do so is a waste of time and space.
- Avoid traditional introductions and jump straight into the response. It flies in the face of everything you have been taught in History, but the Assessors want your first sentence to be your first main point.
- Do not focus on telling the story. As you're writing, keep in mind that you are responding to a question, not retelling the story of the revolution.
- Use well-chosen evidence (dates, names, places, figures) to support your response. An evidence file (see page 13) should be able to assist you with this.
- You are not being asked your opinion in this section. You should agree with the statement you are given and explain why it is true.

Keep in mind the description of this Area of Study: Revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events. This should give you an idea about the types of question you may be asked.

Strategies for handling short-answer questions

- Read the question carefully.
- Determine what the question is asking. Underlining key words will help.
- Identify the key element you will be expected to address.
- Write a topic sentence that:
 1. answers the question directly (ensure that it communicates an idea, not a fact)
 2. allows you to expand your point using detailed knowledge and evidence.
- Write a succinct (short and to the point) answer.
- Remember: the score and the number of lines allowed for a response indicates how many points need to be made in your answer and how much content is necessary.

How do I write a History essay?

There is no simple answer for this question ... essay writing is a skill rather than an art, and like all skills it must be *learned* and *practiced*. It is also vital that you *reflect* on your completed essays, thinking carefully about how well they 'work' and paying close attention to feedback you've received. This is a lifelong process ... all academics, authors and writers (myself included) regularly revisit their work in an attempt to find new and better ways of expressing themselves.

What are the signs of a good History essay?

- It has a clear and firmly expressed argument in the introduction and conclusion
- It expands upon, justifies and defends that argument throughout the essay body
- It has good structure, ie. logical and effective organisation of ideas and topics, that suggests *thinking* and *planning*
- It supports its arguments and statements with evidence (ie. quotations, historians' ideas, statistics, reference to documents)
- It uses clear language that conveys meaning ... it doesn't try to 'sound too clever', becoming unclear or vague in the process
- It *analyses* by considering the *significance* of certain events and *why* they occurred, rather than just *describing* them
- It references its evidence and includes a bibliography of all sources used in research

I once heard a History lecturer explain the process of essay writing thus:

"Writing a History essay is like building a house. Before you build a house you need all the tools and ingredients, so collect them all first. Every house needs a blueprint; this is your essay plan, which you will devise first. The framework of the house is the structure of the essay ... the paragraphs, the topic sentences. All houses need a solid base and the base of your essay is your research; make sure it is solid and you can build upon it. The bricks give the house strength, the strength of your essay will come from evidence. Houses aren't built in five minutes, and neither should essays. Build an essay, don't just sit down and start writing it while hoping for the best."

The information presented on the pages below will hopefully allow you to develop a closer understanding of the mechanics of writing good History essays. It is sometimes long and quite detailed, but that reflects the complexity involved in writing History essays. The skills you might acquire will be useful not only for History, but also for other VCE and tertiary subjects.

The difference between *description* and *analysis*

This skill is the main difference between poor or average History students, and good or great History students. Generally speaking, it is the difference between explaining *what happened* and the higher-order skill of explaining *why it happened* and *evaluating its significance*.

In most cases, it is easy to read a book or watch a documentary and explain what happened at a particular event: the Boston Tea Party, the storming of the Bastille or the 'Bloody Sunday' shootings in Saint Petersburg. Similarly, it's easy to write about the vagaries or quirks of individuals (eg. Thomas Jefferson and his 'affection' for female slaves, Marat's skin diseases or Rasputin's personal hygiene). And it's often more 'fun' to write about these things as though they are a story we are re-telling (particularly if they involve the violent, the ghastly or the just plain weird, as some do).

At this level of History, however, we are less interested in the *what* and the *how* than the *why*. The study of cause, effect and outcome are what concern us. We want to know why things happened, what caused them, what consequences came from them, what their significance or importance was, what links they had to other key events, ideas or leaders. We are in the business of critical evaluation, not story-telling.

So, consider the following points when striving for analysis and evaluation over description:

- When describing or explaining an event, person or policy (eg. the Stamp Act, fall of the Bastille or Rasputin) use one sentence
- Then, consider *what caused or motivated* this event, person or policy
- Then, consider *what effects or outcomes* did this event, person or policy stimulate
- Now, what links did it have to other events, people, groups or policies? Look for connections
- Finally, can we explain its *significance* or 'meaning'? How important was it, by comparison to other factors?

Analysing a document or an image

At some stage in your course you will be asked to write an analysis on a document, an extract or a graphic representation (an image or cartoon). This is easier than it first sounds, provided you follow a process. The process I recommend uses the acronym COMA:

Content What do you see in the source? What events, ideas, leaders or groups are being represented? What symbols does it contain?

Origin Where does the source come from? Who wrote it, what individual or group? From what context did it come?

Motive What is the function of the source? What is it 'for'? How does it want the reader/viewer to think or feel? What is its tone?

Audience Who was it aimed at? At what stage in the revolution did it appear?

So, analysing a source is as simple as *reading or examining it closely*, then *asking yourself questions* based on what you see. Note the annotated questions asked below of the American Revolution image, *The Able Doctor or America swallowing the Bitter Draught*:

Having dissected the image and addressed several questions about it, a formal response can then be written. In this case it will focus on the key revolutionary idea of forced taxation, political and legal oppression and the threat of military action. The writer can discuss these ideas in the context of the Coercive Acts (1774) that prompted them; he/she can link to specific British policies and colonial responses to them; the motives of France and Spain can be explored; critical comment can be made on the strength of British 'tyranny' as it is expressed here. As with most images, the content and ideas are used as a springboard for launching into your own knowledge and understanding of key events, ideas, leaders and movements.

What about a document? Are they any different?

In terms of analysis, no. A document still has content, origin, motive and audience ... and often these are explicitly stated in the text of the document. The difference in framing an analysis is that you should refer to key phrases and statements *within the document*... in other words you should quote from it extensively and use these quotations as the basis for your discussion. Essentially, the same skills and approaches apply.

Two figures stand to the left, foreign countries? France? Spain? What do they want? Their manner seems suspicious	A British politician forces taxed tea down America's throat. The Boston Port Bill is in his coat pocket. His face seems angry.	Britannia, the symbol of Britain, appears to be distraught and cannot look at what is unfolding. Shield down, spear at rest	A figure stands at right carrying a sword with the inscription 'Military Law'. What is his role? What does this suggest?
A figure is peering up the dress of the American maiden... what does it symbolize or represent?		Holding down America is a figure wearing a judge's robes and wig. What does this symbolise or suggest?	
What is the document in the foreground? Why is it torn or discarded?		An Indian maiden is used to symbolise America. Why an Indian? Why a female? Why is she topless? How is she responding to the forced tea? What ideas or acts is this representing?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is taking place in the background? Can you think of revolutionary events this may refer to? • What is the main idea of this image? How can it be expressed in a single sentence? • To what extent are the ideas in this image valid? Are they inaccurate or exaggerated? 			

Writing a paragraph

The trap many students fall into is thinking that the paragraphs in their History essays should be like the paragraphs in novels, magazines or (worse) newspapers, i.e. short snippets of information. This is not the case... in a History essay paragraphs are, in essence, mini-essays themselves: they introduce a point, they expand and explain the point, discuss its significance, support their ideas with evidence, then link back to the question and their main argument. This is obviously a much longer process than just two or three lines ... paragraphs of 200 words or more are not uncommon in good History essays.

A useful tool for framing most kinds of History paragraph is the handy but slightly dubious acronym TEASER:

Topic sentence A short, punchy sentence that introduces the topic, theme, idea, event or leader of that paragraph

Explanation A sentence or two explain what it was, who they were, what it involved or what happened, ie. a summary

Aims What was the event, idea, theme or leader hoping to achieve?
Explain its function and/or motives

Significance An evaluation (yours and/or other historians') of the importance of your particular topic

Evidence Support your Explanation and/or Significance with a quotation or two, statistics or by paraphrasing other historians

Refer back Finally, link back to the question and the argument you have clearly articulated in your introduction

Let's look at an example. The student below has been asked to write an essay on factors contributing to the outbreak of revolution in America; they have developed an argument that "the American Revolution was sparked primarily by economic factors", and this 220-word paragraph focuses on the Stamp Act:

Where the Sugar Act caused annoyance, the Stamp Act (1765) caused outrage. This legislation established direct taxation of the American colonists by requiring all manner of documents to carry a pre-purchased tax stamp before they became official. Wills, contracts, titles, bills of sale, pamphlets, even dice and playing cards would have to bear tax stamps, the income from which would be returned directly to Britain and not to the colonies or local assemblies. The aim was to raise revenue, again to offset the cost of colonial defence; about £1 million was anticipated, according to Scott.¹ The significance of the Stamp Act was its broad impact on all levels of colonial society, and the united and determined response that it provoked. assemblies in America drafted petitions of protest, propagandists wrote broadsides condemning the Act, royal officials were harassed and intimidated into resigning tax collection positions while the people cried 'no taxation without [political] representation!' and pledged not to buy imported British goods until the Act was repealed. Thompson describes the colonial response as a "firestorm"² while Harrison suggests the Stamp Act "revealed the first definitive crack in the framework of empire"³. From this point on, all British legislation would come under intense colonial scrutiny. So, what was formed as a minor piece of economic policy helped to divide England and America, supporting the argument for economic causes of the revolution.

Comment [M1]: Short but clear topic sentence; links to the previous paragraph and includes some evaluation of the topic

Comment [M2]: Explains what the topic was 'all about', does so with sufficient detail

Comment [M3]: Explains the aim clearly and uses evidence

Comment [M4]: Explains the significance of the topic and goes into detail to demonstrate this

Comment [M5]: Uses evidence to help evaluate the significance and 'meaning' of the topic

Comment [M6]: Links back to the writer's argument

Above all else, your paragraph should have *clarity* and must make sense. If it does not, the impact and effectiveness of your information and evidence will be diminished. Re-read your paragraph slowly after you finish writing it, and again after finishing your whole essay. Good luck!

Using evidence

I'm always being told to "use evidence"... but what is evidence?

Evidence is, generally speaking, factual information from another source that is presented in your own essay writing. It may be a direct quote from a document or text, indirect quotations of ideas, arguments or theories proposed by historians, statistics or figures given in support of a statement or argument ... anything that supports a statement, theory or argument you have provided in response to a topic.

I understand the material I'm writing about... why should I have to use evidence?

There are many reasons behind the requirement to include evidence in your coursework and assessment tasks:

- without it, your work will almost certainly lack complexity, depth, detail, substance and validity
- it demonstrates that you have read and researched the topic, and have sound historical skills
- it supports your arguments and helps them appear solid, convincing and justifiable
- it distinguishes a solid piece of research from ideas that are just plagiarized or paraphrased from elsewhere
- use of evidence is a vital skill for studies at tertiary level, in almost all disciplines, and many professions and vocations

From a teacher's perspective, there is nothing worse than reading an essay that shows strong knowledge of the revolution but fails to support or justify that knowledge with evidence. In most cases this is just due to laziness, yet in SACs it *will* result in a deduction in marks. If you are reading, researching and collecting quotations, there really is no excuse for not using evidence.

OK then, so when should I use evidence?

There are no guidelines on the best time to use evidence in an essay (although you should never introduce new material into an essay conclusion). The views of other historians' may be incorporated in intros and conclusions when they correspond or clash with your own, so you can contradict them or offer them as an alternative (this can often be an effective technique). Quotes from documents and texts should appear regularly throughout the body of your essay. As a rule, aim for at least one quote per paragraph in the body of your essay ... more in longer paragraphs.

So how do I incorporate evidence into my essays?

The first step is to prepare to use evidence by having a range of evidence to use. Taking notes, highlighting phrases in texts and hand-outs, and collecting and collating these quotes is an important part of the process before SACs, essays and exams. You should go into these tasks with a range of evidence you can draw upon and use in your writing. Organising evidence into themes or sub-topics will make them easier to access, for example you may collect quotations on the old regime under the headings 'political', 'social' and 'economic'.

Direct quotations should be slotted into your work as neatly and unobtrusively as possible.

- Never use clumsy segues like "In a quote from the Fundamental Laws..." Perhaps the easiest way of slotting in quotes is to start the sentence with the writer and/or the document, then an explanatory statement, then the quote, eg. "Nicholas' Fundamental Laws of 1906 reflect his desire to maintain total sovereignty, stating that he "possesses the supreme autocratic power"
- You don't have to use whole sentences, and in fact it is usually preferable that you don't (see the above example). Use only a pertinent or useful phrase, sometimes this may only be three or four words
- Never use a quote unless you're it supports your point or you are going to examine its meaning ... padding your essay with random or irrelevant quotes won't meet evidence criteria and will just ruin the 'flow' of your essay (generally speaking, no evidence is better than the wrong evidence!)
- Direct quotations must ALWAYS be written word-for-word, in quotation marks, and must be footnoted!

Can I use a whole paragraph as a quote?

Block quotations are whole sections of text, usually two sentences or more, that are quoted as an indented paragraph. It is wise not to use block quotations to 'pad' your essays or fill word quotas; however if such a quotation is important for your argument and won't limit your own writing, by all means use it.

What if I want to talk about the ideas from a document or book without writing 'word for word'?

Indirect quotations are references to documents or texts that explain their ideas or content but don't contain word-for-word lifts from them. You can show your knowledge of the document or text without having to have it in front of you, or to remember verbatim sections of it.

- Again, you should use the name/author of the document or text as early as possible in the sentence, then discuss its date, function, content and meaning, eg. "The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, passed in August 1789, is perhaps the pinnacle of the French Revolution, containing an expression of political beliefs, individual legal and civil rights." (As you can see, important documents often make good topic sentences for paragraphs)
- Just mentioning a document or text is not enough; it is 'listing' evidence but not utilizing it. You must demonstrate your knowledge of its context, content, meaning and function. In other words, 'what does this document show about the revolution at the point it was written?'
- You should include all texts and authors referred to in a comprehensive bibliography, even if they are not footnoted

How do I talk about historians' ideas? What about statistics?

Historians' interpretations and theories are more difficult to grasp but an important aspect of understanding the study of any revolution. Generally speaking, these are how one particular academic/writer interprets the meaning or importance of a particular event, leader or idea. These can usually be summarized in a sentence or phrase, eg. "Smith suggests that the 1905 revolution was no such thing, but was merely a series of unrelated social uprisings and economic grievances."

Statistics and anecdotal evidence should be referenced and footnoted where possible, particularly if they are obscure. Differences between two sets of statistics often occur and like historians' interpretation (see above) understanding how and why this occurs is a key element of history and historiography. Death tolls particularly (eg. 'Bloody Sunday', Stalinist Soviet Union) can be misrepresented, 'shaped' or chosen using different criteria and, consequently, can be vastly different.

